ports should be treated with corporatisation of ports, as reported in the Hindustan Times dated 10th April, 2000;

(b) if so, whether any final agreement so far reached in this regard between the two Ministries; and

(c) whether the Ministry of Surface Transport has drawn up any proposal for the phased corporatisation of ports as well as the participation of private sector for the development of ports in the country, if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN) : (a) No. Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No proposal has been drawn up for phased corporatisation of Ports. The Government have decided to involve private sector in development of Major Ports in accordance with the terms and conditions contained in the guidelines issued in October, 1996.

Modernisation of Cargo Ships

3931. SHRI RAMACHANDRAIAH RUMANDLA : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propsed to modernise cargo ships to face global competition;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the target and allocation made for this purpose ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN) : (a) to (c) Yes Sir, In order to give continued impetus to the growth and development of shipping sector in the country, the Government have set a target to achieve 9 million Gross Registered Tonnage (GRT) during 9th Plan period by acquisition of modern ships. The Shipping Corporation of India, a Public Sector Shipping Company had earlier proposed to acquire 53 vessels aggregating to 23.84 lakhs DWT during 9th Plan period for which Government has allocated an outlay of Rs. 5752 crores. The SCI has revised their acquisition programme and now propose to acquire 21 vessels aggregating to 16.85 lakhs DWT during the said period.